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MILFORD HAVEN URBAN
DISTRICT COUNCIL.
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REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 1925.

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REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF
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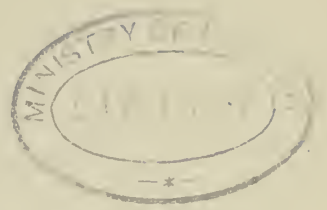
Mr Chairman & Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my
Report for the Year 1925.

Natural & Social Conditions
of the Area.

The Town is built on the Northern Bank of Milford Haven on an eminence which rises sharply from the Sea level. It consists of the Parishes of Milford and Hakin. These are separated by the water in the Milford Docks and Goose Pill, and are connected by a Bridge. Milford Haven as originally built, consisted of three streets, about half a mile long, which run parallel to each other one above the other, and which face South. On one side of the front street, there is a fine Promenade with trees and well laid out grass plots.

At the beginning of last Century, Milford Haven was advertised as a Health Resort on account of its bracing climate and its bathing facilities. The bathing facilities have long since disappeared, practically the whole of the foreshore having been taken up by various industrial concerns, and the little bit that is left is so polluted that it is hardly safe for bathing. Milford, however, can still boast of its bracing climate, and the Vital Statistics of the Town will bear comparison with those of any Health Resort in the Country.



There are but few Welshmen here. The inhabitants consist chiefly of Englishmen from the Seaport Towns on the South and East Coasts. Also a few Scotchmen, having heard there was "Corn in Egypt" have made their homes here.

The struggle for existence is keen; the indolent soon go to the wall or migrate to neighbouring towns. It is significant that Welshmen and Jews seldom prosper here.

The Climate is mild, equable, fairly cool in the Summer and warm in the Winter. Frost and snow are rare. The prevailing winds are South-West.

Geological Formation.

The old red sandstone.

Occupation.

The chief industry of the Town is deep-sea fishing, and there are in connection therewith, several engineering shops. In Pill there are extensive ship breaking works. Of recent years, fish curing is carried on here, and large smoke houses have been erected.

Influence of Occupation on Health.

Fishermen as a class belong to one of the six most healthy occupations, the death rate from respiratory diseases - particularly Tuberculosis - being very low.

Rheumatism, in its various aspects, and diseases of the Circulatory system are however common, and boils and other skin affections are the cause of much suffering and disablement.

Fishermen lead a very arduous life involving at times excessive strain, exposure, and over-fatigue. In their younger days, Fishermen as a rule pay little regard to the laws of health, "A short life and a gay one" seems to be the motto of many, and the dictates of the simple life do not find much favour. Over-eating is very common amongst them, and not a few are worshippers at the Shrines of Venus and Bacchus. And when middle age is reached, the stress and strain of their calling finds many unequal to the task. The arteries have already begun to thicken, the blood pressure is raised, and there is gradually increasing shortness of breath. Such men will hardly reach the allotted span of three score years and ten; many of them dying at an earlier age from Heart Disease or from Apoplexy.

A large number of men are employed on the Docks in connection with the Fish Trade, and their occupation appears to be a healthy one. Neither do the Trawler Owners and Fish Merchants suffer from any illnesses directly attributable to the industry. Some of them however are "burning the candle at both ends" and the long-overdue trade revival is producing a mood of pessimism in many, and "hope deferred maketh the heart sick". And, although all are hopeful that the great possibilities of the Port will soon become realities, in many cases it is only the hope of despair.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area.	948 acres.
Population. Census 1921	7,772
Estimated 1925	8,648
Number of inhabited houses.	1,510
Number of families or separate Occupiers.	2,095
Rateable Value.	£18,367
Assessable Value.	£16,257
Sum represented by a penny rate.	£64
Amount of Poor Law Relief.	£844

BIRTHS.

The total number was 180.-
99 males and 81 females. This gives a
birth-rate of 20.9 per 1,000, and
compares with 18.3 for the whole of
England and Wales. This is by far the
lowest birth-rate during the last twenty
years. In 1913, the last pre-war year,
there were 260 births with a birth-rate
of 36.1 per 1,000.

The following table gives the
births and birth-rate during the last
five years :-

Year.	No of Births.	Birth-rate.
1921	216	27.4
1922	223	27.6
1923	210	25.5
1924	206	24.2
1925	180	20.9

In a Town like Milford Haven
with a healthy virile stock, and where
the age-distribution of the population
favours a high birth rate, this great
fall is a sign of ill-omen. It is

true that at the present time, owing to trade depression, there is a surplus population, yet when prosperity returns to the Port, the trade demand will be so great as to absorb all available labour, and if this fall in the birth-rate, which is common to the whole Country, is not checked there will soon be no need to encourage our young people to emigrate - as a persistent fall in the birth-rate, will in time be an effective remedy for unemployment. This fall is not due to natural causes but to artificial means of birth-control. It is also becoming a common practice to bring on abortion by the taking of poisonous drugs and by other means, and if these practises continue, we shall soon reach the day when there will be "lamentations and weeping, and great mourning. Rachel weeping for her children and will not be comforted because they are not".

DEATHS.

The total number was 67 - giving a death-rate of 7.7. This compares with a death-rate of 12.2 for the whole of England and Wales.

This is a very satisfactory figure. Ten years ago, with a considerably smaller population, there were 126 deaths in one year as compared with 67 last year.

The following table gives the number of deaths and the death-rate for the last five years.

Year.	No of deaths.	Death-rate.
1921	87	11.06
1922	78	9.6
1923	82	9.9
1924	91	10.6
1925	67	7.7

During the year Pneumonia was the "Captain of the men of death" - no fewer than eleven dying of this disease. Of these, all except one were in the prime of life - the average age being 39 - but in each case there was some other complication which militated against recovery.

While the death-rate is low, the amount of sickness (morbidity rate) is of serious dimension. Septic hands and arms are a cause of much disability. Rheumatism is common. Dyspepsia and ulceration of the Stomach is exceedingly common. Many suffer from Tonsillitis, and Pharyngitis is a common complaint of young men due to excessive smoking of inferior cigarettes. Alcoholism is another cause of much sickness and disability for work, and in addition is a cause of a lot of domestic trouble, which not infrequently terminates in the Law Courts and the prison house.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The number of deaths under one year of age was 16 - giving a death-rate of 88.8, which compares with 75 for the whole of England and Wales. This figure is still high, but it is lower than in previous years. Most of the deaths were due to congenital defects and premature birth. It is gratifying to learn, that out of 180 babies born during the year, 140 were breast fed for at least the first few months. Babies brought up on the breast are healthier, happier, and more contented than bottle-fed babies, and in later life are less likely to join the ranks of the wild, revolutionary agitators, few of whom were ever breast-fed.

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

There were no deaths of women during child birth.

HOSPITAL.

There is no Hospital in the Town, either for Infectious or general cases.

Infectious Diseases, requiring isolation, are sent to the County Council Hospital at Pembroke Dock. There is no provision made for Small Pox cases. General cases are sent to the Pembrokeshire County Hospital or to Swansea; a few cases are admitted to the Nursing Home.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

- (a) For Infectious cases -
County Council Ambulance.
- (b) Non-Infectious and
accident
 - (1) Ambulance of Milford
Docks Company.
 - (2) Ambulance of Haverfordwest
Hospital.

STAFF.

Your staff consists of a part-time Medical Officer and a part-time Sanitary Inspector, who is also your Surveyor.

NURSES.

There are two District Nurses for general work supported by grants from the County Council and the Milford Nursing Association.

The number of midwives practising in the Town is six.

Pathological work is carried out at the Beck Laboratory, Swansea.

The sampling of food stuffs for analysis by the Public Analysts is carried out by the Police.

ADOPTIVE ACTS.

None of the Public Health Acts have been adopted. It is desirable that you should adopt the following Acts :-

1. Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890.
2. Certain Sections of the Public Health Acts, Amendment Act, 1907.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY.

A detailed report on this question was submitted during the year.

Milford Haven derives its water supply from Springs in the Old Red Sandstone, and surface water. The gathering ground is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Town on the farms of Thornbury and Hollybush in the Parish of Steynton. Your Council is not the owner, nor has it any Sanitary Control over this area. There are three storage reservoirs, the water being conveyed from one to the other by means of iron pipes.

The Upper Reservoir has a capacity of $29\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons; the middle of $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and the lower reservoir has a capacity of 6 million gallons. Total storage capacity is 39 million gallons.

The water is carried from the lower reservoir in an iron pipe into the pumping station at Priory.

Here it passes through a Candy Filter into three storage tanks (total capacity 100,000 gallons). From these it is pumped into three service reservoirs at the top of Priory Hill (one with a capacity of 1,170,000 gallons supplying the Town, and the other two with a joint capacity of 484,000 gallons supplying the Docks). These reservoirs are covered with a four inch mesh wire netting. From these reservoirs the water flows by gravitation to all parts of the Town.

The St Botolphs Stream is used during the Summer months to augment the supply of water to the Town. This water is passed through the Filter into the storage reservoirs at Priory without any previous storage to allow of sedimentation, and it is obviously polluted at its source and along its whole course. It is, however, never used without being chlorinated.

Your Council have recently contracted with a Firm of Engineers to sink deep wells on the gathering ground, and it is conjectured that at a depth of 350 feet, a supply of water will be found, which will be sufficient for all the needs of the Town.

Recent analysis of the water indicates a high degree of purity.

DRAINAGE & SEWERAGE.

Most of Hakin is drained and sewered - the Sewer opening into the sea at Hakin Point. In view of the large number of houses being built here, it appears desirable that that portion of the general sewerage scheme applicable to Hakin, should be proceeded with as soon as possible.

In Milford there is no system of drainage except for rain water. There are a large number of cesspits and privy middens, the emptying of which is a laborious and costly process.

The following table gives the number of each type of closet :-

Number with fixed receptacles.	972
" " moveable "	231
" of fresh water closets.	277
" " waste " "	24

This means that two-thirds of the houses have privy-middens. It is to be hoped that when you are assured of an ample supply of water, that the Sewerage Scheme will be proceeded with, as a proper drainage scheme is an aesthetic necessity from the point of view of decency and comfort.

SCAVENGING.

There has been great improvement in the system of scavenging during the last few years. Refuse is collected earlier in the day, and most cesspits and ashpits are now emptied during the night. Householders could do a good deal to assist your Council if they were to burn combustible matter instead of placing it in the ashbins. The receptacles used for house refuse are still, in the majority of cases, very unsuitable. They consist chiefly of old buckets, old dishes, wooden boxes, cardboard boxes, &c. Your duties as a Sanitary Authority in regard to house refuse, are clearly set out in the Public Health Acts :-

- (1) It is the duty of every owner to provide properly constructed receptacles for house refuse.
- (2) These receptacles must be properly constructed, covered and kept in good condition.
- (3) The Local Authority must enforce these requirements.
- (4) The Local Authority can impose duties on occupiers to facilitate the collection of house refuse.

The Refuse Tip is on a field, near Priory Hill, within your borders. It is a difficult matter to keep a tip of this sort from becoming a nuisance to yourselves and your neighbours.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

Your Sanitary Inspector, Mr J.P.Morgan, has recently resigned after years of faithful service. Great credit is due to him for keeping the Town in such a clean state under very difficult circumstances.

The following is his Report for the year :-

Milford Haven Urban District Council.

Report of Inspector of Nuisances for
year ended 31st December
1925.

	No of Notices served.			Results.	
	Statutory.	Preliminary and Informal.	Total.	Remedied.	Prosecutions.
Sanitary accommodation insufficient.	-	-	-	-	-
Defective or out of repair.	2	7	9	9	-

	Statut- ory.	Informal.	Total.	Remed- ied.	Prose- cutions.
Totals brought forward.	2	7	9	9	-
Want of Ventilation.	3	9	12	12	-
Overcrowding.	-	1	1	1	-
Premises Dirty.	-	-	-	-	-
Defective drains and cesspits.	-	3	3	3	-
Defective Rain Water troughs.	2	8	10	10	-
To empty and clean privies.	-	5	5	5	-
Ashpits & Cesspits.	-	12	12	12	-
Totals.	7	45	52	52	-

No of premises disinfected. 14

No of Inspections made :-

(a) Systematic Inspection.	178
(b) Occasional "	113
(c) On receipt of complaints.	11
	<u>302</u>

No of houses inspected. 274.

(Signed) J.P. MORGAN.

Sanitary Inspector.

Milford Haven.

30th January 1926.

SCHOOLS.

The Sanitary condition of these is satisfactory except that in some cases there is considerable overcrowding.

All cases of Infectious Disease occurring amongst school children are reported to me by the Head teachers. Such cases, together with contacts, where necessary are excluded.

HOUSING.

Number of houses erected during the year :-

(1) Private.	17
(2) Subsidy Houses.	28
Total.	45

During the last five years, the number of houses built are as follows :-

(1) Municipal Scheme.	76
(2) By Private Enterprise.	54
(3) By Private Enterprise and Subsidy.	28

1. Unfit Dwelling-houses.

Inspection-(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts).

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925.

113

(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation.

(4) Number of dwelling-houses
(exclusive of those referred to
under the preceding sub-head) found
not to be in all respects reasonably
fit for human habitation. 15

2. Remedy of defects without
Service of formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses
rendered fit in consequence of informal
action by the Local Authority or their
Officers. 3

3. Action under Statutory Powers.

A.-Proceedings under Sections 3 of the
Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of
which notices were served requiring
repairs. 12

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were
rendered fit after service of formal
notices :-

(a) By owners. 11
(b) By Local Authority in
default of owners. 1

B.-Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect
of which notices were served requiring
defects to be remedied. 31

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which
defects were remedied after service
of formal notices :-

(a) By owners. 31
(b) By Local Authority
in default of owners. -

C.-Proceedings under Sections 11, 14,
and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.

- | | | |
|--|---|-------|
| (1) Number of representations made with
a view to the making of Closing Orders. |) | |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of
which Closing Orders were made. |) | |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of
which Closing Orders were determined,
the dwelling-houses having been rendered
fit. |) | None. |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of
which Demolition Orders were made. |) | |
| (5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in
pursuance of Demolition Orders. |) | |

GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS.

Taken as a whole, the houses are well built, and are kept in a sanitary condition. There are however several houses in the Town unfit for human habitation. These are allowed to be occupied because of the great dearth of houses, and because in many instances the occupants are unable to pay an economic rent. The extent of the shortage is shown by the fact that there are 200 applicants for new houses. It is satisfactory to find that 28 houses were built during the year under the Subsidy Scheme, the terms of which are so favourable as to be within the means of most fishermen in the Port. Out of the 76 houses built under the Housing Act 1919, a large proportion are occupied by people who are able to build their own houses. This Act was passed to help those who cannot help themselves, and there should be a wage limit to the occupants of Municipal houses, otherwise slum dwellings will continue to be occupied, and over-crowding amongst the poorer population will remain unabated.

INSPECTION & SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(1) MILK.

There are 20 registered dairymen supplying the Town with milk. All the milk, with the exception of that from 5 dairies, comes from the surrounding Rural districts. All the dairies situated within your District are in a fairly satisfactory condition. In one dairy, modern appliances for cooling and bottling the milk are installed. And it is merely a question of time when Public opinion will demand that all milk be bottled at its source. Several vendors from outside the District are also supplying milk in bottles. This does not give any guarantee that such milk is clean and wholesome. It simply means that there can be no contamination of the milk from the time it leaves the dairy to the time it is delivered to the consumer.

Under the Milk and Dairies Act, 1915, which came into force in September 1925, provision is made for stopping the supply of milk which is likely to cause Tuberculosis. The County Council is the Authority for prohibiting the sale of such milk, and it is to be hoped that periodic examinations of all dairy cows in the District will soon be instituted.

At the present time, none of the milk sold in the Town is guaranteed free from Tubercle Bacilli. It is better, therefore, not to run any risk; children under 12 months should be given dried milk, and in the case of older children, cows milk should always be boiled.

(2) MEAT.

There are two slaughter houses in the Town. These are frequently inspected, and are in a satisfactory condition. Most of the meat sold in the Town is slaughtered outside the Urban Area. The meat is frequently examined, both at the slaughter houses and in the shop.

No unsound meat was discovered. The Meat shops are kept in a clean condition, and there has been some improvement in the handling and distribution of meat since the Meat Regulations 1924 came into force. Some of the meat vendors place the meat in cold storage during hot weather, but it is not practicable for this to be done in the case of small traders. In all cases, however, there should be fly screens, awnings for the windows, and adequate ventilation.

(3) OTHER FOODS.

Regulations for the protection of other foods are quite as necessary as in the case of meat, particularly when the articles are eaten raw, or are bought already cooked. Vegetables and fruit are unloaded on dirty pavements; and shop windows are dressed with various articles of diet e.g. cakes, cheese, butter, lard, bacon, &c., and are exposed to flies and dust from the streets.

BAKEHOUSES.

There are 12 bakehouses. Several have been built in back-yards adjoining dirty accommodation roads. Having sanctioned their erection in such positions, your street cleaners should pay special attention to these roads. Some require re-paving, and all should be tar sprayed so as to facilitate the cleaning of them.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

During the last five years, there has been no severe outbreak of any of the notifiable infectious diseases. The following are the figures for last year.

Disease.	Total cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Small Pox.	Nil.	-	-
Scarlet Fever.	11	Nil	Nil
Diphtheria.	1	Nil	Nil
Enteric Fever.	Nil	-	-
Puerperal Fever.	Nil	-	-
Pneumonia.	Nil	-	-
Erysipilas.	4	Nil	Nil

These are remarkable figures, and will bear comparison with those of any town in the Kingdom.

Isolation for Infectious diseases is provided by the County Council in an up-to-date Hospital at Pembroke Dock, and a motor ambulance is also provided by the County Council.

Diphtheria anti-toxin is provided by your Council free of charge, and Bacteriological investigations are carried out at the Beck Laboratory, Swansea.

No persons were vaccinated during the year by your Medical Officer under the 1917 Regulations.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New cases and deaths from the disease in 1925 :-

Age Periods.	New cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5				1				
10		1					1	
15				1				
20		2			1	1		
25	1	1		1				
35	2							
45								
55								
65 & upwards.					1			
Totals.	3	4	-	3	2	1	1	-

The Number of cases notified during the year is ten, which is exactly half the number notified in 1924, and the deaths were 4 against 14 in 1924.

The following cases show how highly infectious the disease is, and the need of isolating all cases which are in an infectious state.

- (1) A child develops Tuberculous Meningitis and dies; the mother is found to be in an advanced state of Pulmonary Tuberculosis.
- (2) Two children die of Tuberculous Meningitis; the father suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.
- (3) A child dies of Tuberculous Meningitis. soon afterwards another child belonging to another family in the same house dies of Tuberculous Meningitis. A second child

in this family develops Tuberculosis of the Lungs; a relative which visited this house daily develops Pleurisy with effusion; a male relative who was allowed to come into the house every night to sleep on the couch in the kitchen, is found to be in an advanced state of Tuberculosis, and dies within a fortnight of notification.

The Public Health Act, 1925, Section 62, gives Local Authorities power to apply to the Magistrates for an Order for the compulsory removal to Hospital of persons in an infectious state, and who are a danger to others.

No action was taken under this Section during the year.

Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925.

These Regulations give Sanitary Authorities powers to stop any person suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and who is in an infectious state, from being employed in the Milk Trade.

No action was taken under these Regulations.

Although the vital statistics of the Town are in many respects highly satisfactory, this is due to a large extent to natural causes and the inherent vitality of the population, and not to any high standard of sanitation. During the last five years there has been great improvement in the superficial cleanliness of the Town - the streets are well kept, and are a great credit to your Council, and scavenging is being carried out more thoroughly and at an earlier hour than previously. But the stranger in our midst is not here long before he is conscious of certain stench and effluvia which are disagreeable to his sense of smell. The cause of these smells is well known to you. Here is a problem which you should tackle at no distant date.

Another problem of great importance is the provision of more houses. The over-crowding which exists in many houses is hard to beat in any civilized community; and it is distressing to see young mothers wearing out a dreary existence in a small back room amongst squalid surroundings. Such conditions will inevitably mean the spread of Tuberculosis, a high infant mortality, and much sickness and misery amongst the women and children.

Another great need is Education on health matters, and the teaching of Hygiene, especially to girls, should be one of the most important functions of our Educational system. And precept should be followed by practice in the school, otherwise it is likely to prove ineffective in the home. For instance, it is of little use teaching girls about cleanliness of the home and its surroundings if ashbins are left all day on the pavement at the entrance to the school where hundreds of children attend daily, as in the case in one of the schools in the Town.

The following table gives the causes of death during 1925.

Causes of Death.	M.	F.
All causes.	35	32
Whooping cough.		2
Influenza.	1	
Tuberculosis of respiratory system.	2	1
Other tuberculosis diseases.	1	
Cancer, malignant disease.	2	3
Cerebral haemorrhage &c.	2	2
Heart disease.	2	2
Bronchitis.	2	1
Pneumonia (all forms)	5	6
Diarrhoea, &c. (under 2 years)	1	2
Appendicitis and typhlitis.	1	
Cirrhosis of liver.		2
Acute and chronic nephritis.	1	
Congenital debility and malformation, premature birth.	6	4
Other deaths from violence.	1	1
Other defined diseases.	8	6
Deaths of Infants (Total.	10	6
under 1 year. (Illegitimate.	1	
Total Births.	99	81
Legitimate.	97	78
Illegitimate.	2	3
Population.	8,645.	

The following table gives the work done under the Factories and Workshops Act.

1.-Inspection of Factories, Workshops & Workplaces.

Premises.	Number of		
	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.
Factories. (including Factory Laundries).	10	7	-
Workshops. (including Workshop Laundries).	63	18	-
Workplaces. (other than Outworkers premises).	-	-	-
Total.	73	25	-

2.- Defects found in Factories, Workshops & Workplaces.

Particulars.	Number of defects.			
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred to H.M. Inspector.	Prosecutions.
Nuisances under the Public Health Acts :-				
Want of cleanliness.	3	3	-	-
Want of ventilation.	2	2	-	-
Carried forward.	5	5	-	-

Particulars.	Found.	Remedied.	Referred to H.M. Inspector.	Prose- cutions.
Brought forward.	5	5	-	-
Overcrowding.	-	-	-	-
Want of drainage of floors.	7	7	-	-
Other Nuisances.	8	8	-	-
Sanitary) insufficient. 1		1	-	-
Accommodation) unsuitable				
(or defective. 1		1	-	-
(Not separate				
) for sexes. 3	3	3	-	-
Offences under the Factory & Workshops Acts.				
Illegal occupation of underground bakehouse.	-	-	-	-
Other offences.	-	-	-	-
Total.	25	25	-	-

I am,
Mr Chairman & Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) H.O.WILLIAMS.

